

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

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TO AMEMBASSY LONDON NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LILONGWE NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY GABORONE NIACT IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN NIACT IMMEDIATE

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: PDEV, RH, UK

SUBJECT: RHODESIA: TALKS WITH OWEN

1. WE MET BRIEFLY WITH JOHNNY GRAHAM FOR A WRAP-UP SESSION
BEFORE DEPARTING LONDON THIS MORNING (FEBRUARY 24) TO GO
OVER ONCE AGAIN OUR NEAR TERM APPROACHES TO THE VARIOUS
PARTIES.

2. FRONT LINE AND NIGERIA: WE CONFIRMED OUR AGREEMENT TO
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DRAFT INSTRUCTIONS FOR A JOINT APPROACH BY OUR AMBASSADORS
TO THE FRONT LINE AND NIGERIA. OUR PURPOSE WOULD BE (A)
TO SHARE WITH THEM IN FAIRLY FRANK TERMS OUR VIEWS OF THE
SITUATION THAT HAS BEEN CREATED BY EVENTS IN SALISBURY AND
BY OUR INABILITY TO GET NECESSARY ENDORSEMENT FROM THEM
AND THE PATRIOTIC FRONT FOR THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS;
AND (B) TO SEEK THEIR VIEWS ON HOW WE MIGHT TOGETHER

PROCEED FROM HERE TOWARD A RHODESIAN SETTLEMENT INVOLVING ALL THE PARTIES. THE MOST DIFFICULT TASK WE WILL HAVE IN MAKING THESE APPROACHES IS EXPLAINING (A) WHY WE ARE NOT IN A POSITION TO CONDEMN THE SALISBURY TALKS, AND (B) WHY WE ARE NOT AT THIS TIME VIGOROUSLY PURSUING THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS. WE AGREED THAT THE U.S. SIDE

WOULD HAVE A FIRST CRACK AT DRAFTING THE INSTRUCTIONS TO AMBASSADORS AND SUBMIT THEM TO THE BRITISH FOR COMMENT.

3. MUZOREWA: GRAHAM OFFERED TO PREPARE FOR OUR REVIEW A DRAFT OF A COMMUNICATION TO MUZOREWA SKETCHING CRITERIA THAT WOULD HAVE TO BE MET IF A SALISBURY AGREEMENT IS TO STAND ANY CHANCE OF WINNING WIDER ACCEPTANCE. WE EXPRESSED RESERVATIONS ABOUT A WRITTEN MESSAGE OF THIS KIND TO MUZOREWA AND OUR STRONG PREFERENCE FOR AN ORAL PRESENTATION, BUT AGREED TO REVIEW WHATEVER DRAFT BRITISH PREPARED. GRAHAM IN TURN AGREED TO EXPLORE FURTHER THE POSSIBILITIES OF ARRANGING A MEETING WITH MUZOREWA OR ONE OF HIS CLOSEST ADVISORS.

4. WE AGREED THAT A DIRECT APPROACH TO SMITH ALONG LINES SIMILAR TO THOSE TAKEN WITH MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE WOULD NOT BE APPROPRIATE, SINCE SMITH LIKELY TO PUBLICIZE IT AS ATTEMPT TO MEDDLE IN AND UNDERMINE
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INTERNAL TALKS. INSTEAD, WE AGREED TO MAKE OUR VIEWS KNOWN TO SOUTH AFRICANS, WHO IN TURN CAN BE EXPECTED TO PASS THEM ON TO SMITH. BRITISH AGREED TO DRAFT INSTRUCTIONS FOR OUR AMBASSADORS IN CAPE TOWN FOR OUR REVIEW, AND WE AGAIN EXPRESSED STRONG PREFERENCE FOR ORAL RATHER THAN WRITTEN APPROACH.

5. IN ABSENCE OF AGREEMENT WITH BRITISH ON HOW TO HANDLE FUTURE CONTACTS OR POSSIBLE NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE PATRIOTIC FRONT, WE SUGGESTED THAT AT MINIMUM WE SHOULD PROVIDE AMBASSADORS WITH INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE IN TALKING WITH THE FRONT, WHICH WE OFFERED TO DRAFT. BRITISH AGREED IN PRINCIPLE, SUBJECT TO REVIEW OF OUR DRAFT.

6. DURING COURSE OF CONVERSATION, GRAHAM MENTIONED THAT SITHOLE HAD SAID HE WOULD BE RETURNING TO LONDON MARCH 3 AND HAS ASKED OWEN FOR ANOTHER MEETING ON MARCH 4. ACCORDING TO GRAHAM, OWEN HAD REFUSED TO BE PINNED DOWN ON POSSIBILITY OF ANOTHER MEETING AND HE, GRAHAM, HAD COUNSELED OWEN AGAINST IT. WE SEIZED THIS OPPORTUNITY TO REITERATE OUR CONCERN

ABOUT HOW FURTHER MEETINGS WITH SITHOLE WOULD BE
PERCEIVED BY FRONT LINE AND PATRIOTIC FRONT, PAR-
TICULARLY IN THE ABSENCE OF SIMILAR EFFORT ON OUR

PART TO MAINTAIN CONTACTS WITH THEM. WE AGAIN
STRESSED NEED TO REACH SOME DECISION ON HOW TO
PROCEED WITH RESPECT TO ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS.

7. COMMENT: WE RECOGNIZE THAT AS MATTERS PRESENTLY
STAND, THERE IS AN IMBALANCE IN CLEARLY DEFINED
APPROACHES WE HAVE AGREED SHOULD BE TAKEN WITH IN-
TERNAL NATIONALISTS AND SOUTH AFRICA AS OPPOSED
TO STILL UNDEFINED APPROACHES WE PLAN TO TAKE
WITH THE FRONT LINE AND PATRIOTIC FRONT, ESPECIALLY
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WITH REGARD TO ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS. WE WILL
BE ADDRESSING THIS PROBLEM URGENTLY IN WASHINGTON.
IN MEANTIME, WE WOULD APPRECIATE ON URGENT BASIS
YOUR VIEWS ON WHAT CONTENTS OF OUR HOLDING-ACTION
APPROACHES TO THE FRONT LINE AND PATRIOTIC FRONT
SHOULD BE.

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